

## Goal V: Promote Cooperation and Inclusiveness in Community Initiatives

### Objective 1

Enhance Local Pride and Levels of Engagement in the Arlington Community

### Objective 2

Embrace Arlington's Diversity When Addressing Community Issues

### Objective 3

Achieve the Full Potential for Using Strategic Partnerships to Meet Arlington's Goals

The culture and leadership of a community is one of the most significant components of successful economic development work. Even the best ideas will fall flat if the leadership, partnerships, and community-wide buy-in are not there to support them. This goal focuses on each of these concepts in three different objectives.

**Objective One** focuses on achieving community-wide buy-in for the initiatives of this strategy and future efforts, as well as enhancing local pride in Arlington. This is achieved by pursuing an internal marketing campaign—including local media coverage, presentations, forums, and other opportunities to educate local residents and business owners about the importance of purs-

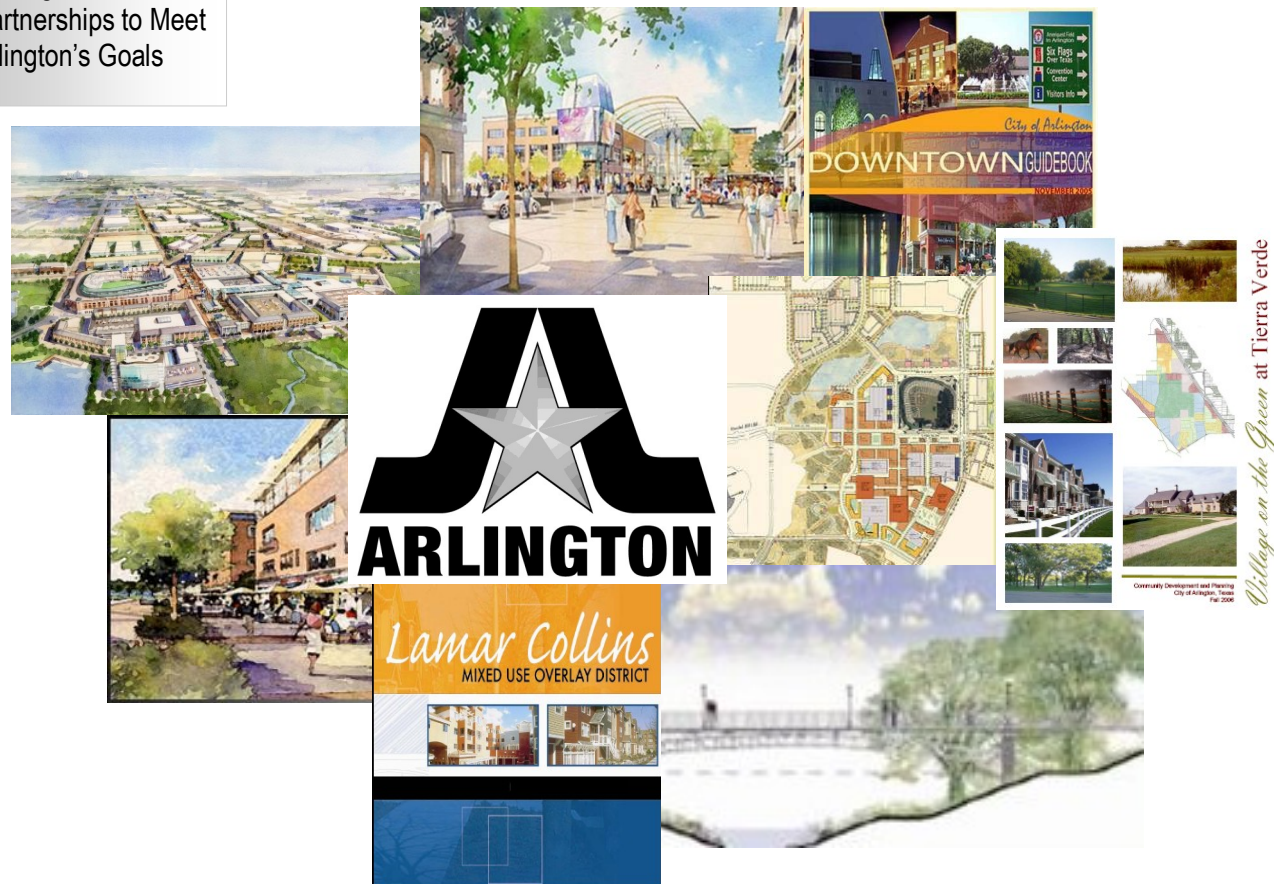
ing the initiatives in this strategy.

**Objective Two** focuses on more effectively integrating Arlington's diverse populations into the process of achieving community initiatives by partnering with minority organizations in all endeavors. Additionally, the community should host sessions and forums on diversity to identify ways to fully embrace all members of the Arlington community.

**Objective Three** is about strengthening partnerships, both at the local and regional levels. Many of these partnerships are already in place; thus, the intent is that Arlington's leaders will continue to commit to working collaboratively with both local and regional organizations, as well as leverage state-level opportunities, to more effectively achieve mutual goals.

The attainment of all three objectives of this goal is vital to achieving a stronger, more proactive Arlington that is able to fully leverage its resources and successfully implement its most progressive initiatives. To fulfill the needs outlined in the *Champion Arlington Strategic Plan* and achieve the positive change of which Arlington is capable, visionary public and private leaders must guide a coordinated implementation effort.

Now that the strategy development process is complete, the real work begins as the Arlington community embraces the *Champion Arlington Strategic Plan* and moves forward with its implementation.



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# Champion Arlington

## Introduction

This strategy is an outgrowth of organization and community work on the following City Council outcomes and priorities:

- The City provides a balance between residential and commercial development and redevelopment that results in improved quality of life and a favorable business climate.
- Arlington is a pre-eminent convention and tourist destination.
- Arlington is a recognized leader of creative and effective economic development policies and practices.
- Downtown is a vibrant destination for the community and a thriving center of activity.
- The commercial tax base is expanding.

The City of Arlington has developed an economic development strategy, that will strengthen the community's cooperative future by creating an environment and customer service spirit that attracts new residents, consumer spending, quality investment and job creation. Arlington, like many first-tier suburbs in the Metroplex, is entering a stage of maturity where growth has slowed and the need to diversify the tax base is critical to maintaining the quality of life our residents have always enjoyed. The Champion Arlington Economic Development Strategy provides the City with an opportunity to address the community's most pressing needs and come together behind a plan for the progressive change necessary to attain sustainable economic prosperity in Arlington. Primary components of the plan include

1. Promote economic growth and diversification
2. Maintain a competitive workforce
3. Focus on redeveloping existing areas
4. Enhance quality of life
5. Promote cooperation and inclusiveness in community initiatives

To be effective, an economic development strategy must be supported by the entire community. All public and private sector leaders throughout the City have a part to play in the successful implementation of the strategy, which will require us to assemble and enhance our community resources, talents and creativity. Moreover, we must effectively communicate the idea that each person working and living in Arlington is responsible for ensuring that our economy remains strong and vibrant.

This economic development strategy will continue to make Arlington a leader in the Metroplex. We will be a community of choice, known for our thriving neighborhoods, commercial and entertainment districts, well maintained infrastructure, good jobs, quality housing choices and educated workforce. Implementing this strategy will ensure that Arlington has a winning future.

- **Community Commitment**—The Champion Arlington Strategy must be communicated throughout the community. The City and its economic development partners must ensure that the right resources are identified and applied in a timely manner.
- **Implementation Progress**—Steps to achieve the short-term wins in the strategy are underway, while groundwork will be laid to achieve the longer-term goals.
- **Keeping Score**—Progress made toward each goal in the Champion Arlington Strategy will be tracked. Performance measures and benchmarks will be reported on a regular basis.



Goal I: Grow and Diversify the Economy

Objective 1  
Retain and Expand Existing Companies

Objective 2  
Create, Expand, and Recruit Companies in Targeted Business Sectors

Objective 3  
Provide the Resources and Support Necessary for Entrepreneurs and Small Business People to Create and Sustain Business

Objective 4  
Enhance the City Government’s Provision of Services and Achieve a More Sustainable Revenue Balance

Objective 5  
Develop a Brand Identity and Comprehensive Marketing Strategy for the City of Arlington

Objective one, Retain and Expand Existing Companies, will be implemented through a full-scale, best-practices program to contact and visit existing businesses about retention and expansion issues. The City’s program must ensure that the issues of a variety of existing businesses are heard and communicated to the appropriate people and that economic development representatives take proactive steps to help these companies expand their operations.

Objective two , Create, Expand and Recruit Companies in Targeted Business Sectors, is based on pre-existing community strengths and desired economic outcomes. The businesses Arlington is targeting include:

- Advanced Manufacturing and Trade
- Health Care and Life Sciences
- Hospitality and Tourism
- Logistics and Trade
- Professional, Business and Information Services

Objective three plans to



Provide the Resources and Support Necessary for Entrepreneurs and Small Business People to Create and Sustain Businesses. Research has shown that most job growth in the U.S. is derived from small business development and expansion. There are two types of small businesses that Arlington should focus on—high growth firms based on a new product or process, and lifestyle businesses. Both can help strengthen the local economy by providing stronger earnings potential for the workforce. Work must be done to create an environment conducive to high-growth venture development. Additional actions must be taken to foster the cultural shift needed to encourage more small business ownership.

Objective four, Enhance the City Government’s Provision of Services and Achieve a More Sustainable Revenue Balance, focuses on maintaining Arlington’s competitiveness in the region. To do this, the City must improve service delivery to create a more attractive climate for business.

Objective five is Develop a Brand

Identity and Comprehensive Marketing Strategy for the City of Arlington. Whether it is a company selling widgets, or a local community selling itself as a place to live, work, and visit, a compelling brand and marketing message are persuasive tools for an effective sale. In the arena of economic development, an effective brand must primarily:

1. Differentiate a community from its competitors
2. Be a true representation of what the community is and what it has to offer prospective residents, business owners, site selection personnel, and visitors.

For Arlington, the brand identification and marketing strategy development process is critical to the community’s economic development success.



Goal II: Maintain a Competitive Workforce

Objective 1  
Work to Assist Pre-K through 12th Grade Public School Performance, Student Preparedness, and Perceptions of the System

Objective 2  
Maximize the potential of Tarrant County College-Southeast Campus, University of Texas at

In today’s knowledge-based economy, the most competitive local economies are those with a well-trained workforce. Therefore, workforce development is a critical element of any economic development strategy. Particularly important is educating and transitioning youth and the long-term unemployed into well-paying jobs.

Primary and secondary education is vital to building a student’s foundation for further education, because more and more job opportunities require a

two-year or four-year degree. The first step to pursuing Objective One of the strategy is the creation of an Arlington Education Task Force to bring relevant partners to the table to identify and discuss public education issues, and develop a strategic action plan to resolve them.

Arlington is competitive in providing two-year degree opportunities in some fields at Tarrant County College’s (TCC) southeast campus, and the City is very competitive in four-year degree opportu-

nities with the University of Texas-Arlington (UTA). Both TCC and UTA are key community resources whose future growth should be based on a demand-driven approach to identifying training needs, to expand each of these institutions’ value to the local economy.

Therefore, Objective Two is an important initiative, for which Arlington’s leaders have already had

(Continued on page 3)

Arlington, and other workforce development resources

Objective 3

Provide the support necessary to maintain a competitive workforce

Goal II: Maintain a Competitive Workforce (Continued)

success with the establishment of the Center for Continuing Education and Workforce Development. The action steps in this objective focus on ways to further leverage this Center, including establishing a curriculum committee to facilitate a

demand-driven approach to workforce development.

In Objective Three, the focus is on addressing the primary needs of the “hidden” workforce, including the provision of transportation and child care services. The availability of these

services enables individuals to access both training and job opportunities, which are critical to obtaining a higher economic level and quality of life.

Goal III: Focus on Redeveloping Existing Areas

Objective 1  
Foster Revitalization of Existing Neighborhoods

Objective 2  
Pursue Effective Revitalization of Downtown Arlington and the Entertainment District

Objective 3  
Increase Homeownership Levels and Improve Housing Options

There is a growing national movement in both the private and public sector to revitalize local communities in response to increasing public awareness of the unsustainable structure of most American cities today, and the increasing demand for more dynamic, mixed-use neighborhoods with destination appeal.

The creation of these “destination” areas requires developing diverse, mixed communities of civic, housing, retail, and office uses, with accompanying infrastructure, to create more pedestrian-oriented environments. These areas are considered by many to be more vibrant, attractive communities for both day and evening activities.

This goal capitalizes on using Arlington’s existing neighborhoods to conduct a revitalization effort focused on creating

more attractive, pedestrian-oriented areas. The ultimate result will be the stronger sense of place increasingly desired by tourists, prospective business owners, and potential new residents, not to mention existing business owners and residents.

To achieve that end, Objective One focuses on the needs of existing neighborhoods, beginning with the development of a new city-wide comprehensive land use plan that will reflect the national trend towards creating more mixed-used communities.

Objective Two focuses on central Arlington — Downtown Arlington, the Entertainment District, and the Lamar/Collins overlay district. With the pursuit of strategic actions, these areas can become a center of activity and true destination for not only Arlington, but the

entire Dallas-Fort Worth region.

Additionally, this goal addresses the need to improve housing options in the City, to enhance standards of living, and improve the overall attractiveness of the Arlington community.

In part, by taking advantage of ongoing initiatives — including the implementation of the December 2005 document, *Housing: A Critical Component of Our Economic Development Strategy*, and Arlington’s participation in Fannie Mae’s Deep Dive program — the action steps in Objective Three focus on improving housing options for all income-levels in the community.

Goal IV: Enhance Arlington’s Quality of Life

Objective 1  
Recruit More “Knowledge” Workers and Young College Graduates to Arlington

Objective 2  
Expand Arts and Cultural Amenities in the City

Objective 3  
Develop More Parks, Trails and Other Amenities for Recreational Activity

As a municipality in the center of a major metropolitan area, Arlington is well positioned to attract people, businesses, and day-trip and overnight visitors. However, Arlington cannot leverage that locational advantage unless it maintains an attractive quality of life able to compete with the other municipalities in the metro area.

A desirable, typically mobile population for a community to attract are so-called “knowledge” workers and recent college graduates. Thus, this goal focuses on recruitment strategies directed to these demographic constituencies, as well as the amenities most attractive to them – arts, cultural, and recreational activities.

Additionally, attractive, pedestrian-oriented, mixed-used neighborhoods are proven draws for both “knowledge” workers and visitors, and create an environment that can foster a vibrant arts culture. Thus, the attainment of Goal IV is vital to

the successful attainment of Objective One of this goal.

The action steps of Objective One focus on developing a marketing strategy, possible incentives program, and college graduate retention program, all focused on attracting and retaining a young, educated workforce in Arlington.

Objective Two affirms the community’s work to establish an Arlington Arts Council, and recommends the group continue with its plans to develop a vision statement and action plan to pursue the most underserved, in-demand arts amenities and events for Arlington.

Objective Three focuses on creating an environment that supports recreational activity via the development of parks, trails, and other amenities. Key focuses of the action steps are park development and maintenance, and creating a stronger sidewalk network and bicycle lane coverage.

The attainment of Objectives Two and Three will not only support the knowledge worker recruitment strategy, but also help diversify Arlington’s offerings to prospective visitors, thus serving the City’s Hospitality and Tourism target efforts.

The attainment of this goal also supports business recruitment strategies (including the recruitment and retention of prospective small business owners) because, increasingly, business owners and site selection personnel are heavily weighting quality of life factors into their location decisions. Arlington must, therefore, strengthen its assets to maintain competitiveness within the Metroplex.

Finally, all improvements will benefit current Arlington residents, thus improving the resident-retention rate and increasing the likelihood residents will serve as informal “sales” people to support tourist, resident, and business attraction efforts.